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Julia Child à la cable TV: simple cooking with French names

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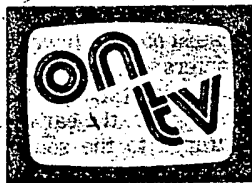
Julia Child is forsaking French cooking in favor of "Just Good Food."

Admirers of the indomitable Julia have been able to see her now and then on ABC's "Good Morning America" as well as on her WGBH-originated "French Chef" on PBS. Now, more than 6 million cable viewers will be able to see her on Daytime, the new Hearst/ABC cable service beginning this month.

Don't confuse the ABC Daytime with the USA Daytime, still another cable service airing on the USA Cable Network. ABC Daytime started on the air March 15 and provides what it unabashedly calls women's programming on weekdays from 1-5 p.m. USA Daytime began April 5 and airs on weekdays from 8 a.m.-6 p.m.

And you thought keeping track of the commercial channels was confusing!

But, back to Julia. The Daytime series tries to keep to simple foods, although Julia explains in an interview airing this month with Daytime.



hosts Sharon Lovejoy and Alanna Davis that sometimes giving a simple dish a complex French name makes it seem more exciting and appetizing.

Miss Child explains that she did not start cooking until she was 32, when she met her husband in Ceylon where they both worked for the Office of Strategic Services, precursor of the Central Intelligence Agency. "I wanted to be a spy," she explains, "but I turned out to be a file clerk."

Her husband moved into the diplomatic corps and they lived for a long time in France where, she explains, "food for the French is a national sport; eating a serious business." According to Miss Child, nouvelle cuisine has opened up French cooking to everybody since it is no longer so fussy. She believes in using every kitchen aid possible, especially the food processor. "I'm interested in turning people on to food, and the easier it is [to prepare], the more they will get involved and learn."

"Pot roast is delicious," she says, "if you call it by another name. Many people will love fondue du tomate as long as you don't say it is just chopped up tomato with scallions. Although calling it by a simple name may encourage people to prepare it themselves."

She believes that families should cook together. "Children need success to build their egos, so start them making cakes and hamburgers and things they like to eat. It will develop their palates."

"If you like good food and love to eat, you have all the makings of a good cook,"

says Julia Child. "If you have ever made anything from scratch, you can make anything else from scratch," she reassures novices.

Nobody should miss Julia Child, whenever she shows up on the air. So call your local cable operators for the days and times. If it is not scheduled for your local system, request that they sign up for Daytime, the new Hearst/ABC women's channel.